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PRIME MINISTER

This letter from the Lord President's Office is simply to let you know that the Services Committee will be publishing a report on a new Parliamentary building next Wednesday.

The Committee recommend that the restoration and conversion of the buildings facing on to Parliament Street should start as soon as possible. This would provide some 180 offices to accommodate about 90 MPs and their support staff (this is the area circled in red on the plan at Flag A).

The cost of this work would be £15 million at 1982 prices, spread over five years. The development could be finished by 1986/87. Since the buildings facing Parliament Street are already in a poor state of repair they will in any case require at least £2 million worth of repairs in the near future unless they are developed.

The cost would fall on the PSA Vote. There is no provision for this as yet, and the Lord President will be writing to the Chancellor and the Environment Secretary shortly.

The Services Committee also published without comment a study by surveyors of the prospects for a mixed development of the remainder of the Bridge Street site. The surveyors conclude that private sector organisations would be interested in undertaking construction of a mixed Parliamentary/commercial complex which might provide accommodation for 200 or so MPs and their staff without cost to public funds. The Services Committee say they will consider further the options for the second phase of the Bridge Street redevelopment in the light of the House's views on their report.

The Lord President feels that it would be desirable to arrange a Debate on this report before Whitsun.

WM

24 March 1983